

come. The thoughts of death, of judgment, and of a life beyond the grave, which weighed like a nightmare on the minds of the Egyptians, seem to have been banished for a time. Even the name of Osiris, the awful judge of the dead, is not once mentioned in the graves at Tell-el-Amarna. All this lasted only during the life of the reformer. His death was followed by a violent

reaction. ^J 1 he old gods were reinstated in their rank and privileges : their names and images were restored, and new temples were built. But all the shrines and palaces reared by the late king were thrown down : even the sculptures that referred to him and to his god in rock-tombs and on the sides of hills were erased or filled up with stucco : his name appears on no later monument, and was carefully omitted from all official lists. The new capital was abandoned, never to be inhabited again. Its plan can still be traced in the sands of the desert.

This attempt of King Amenophis IV. is only an extreme example of a tendency which appears to have affected the religion of Egypt as far back as we can trace it. Therefore, to come back to our point, in attempt- icientifica- ing to discover the original character of any Egyptian god, ^{thTsun^s} no weight can be given to the identification of him with no evidence other gods, least of all with the sun-god Ra. Far from original helping to follow up the trail, these identifications only cross character and confuse it. The best evidence for the oriinal character E of the Egyptian gods is to be found in their ritual and ^{g^{od}-} myths, so far as these are known, and in the manner in

which they are portrayed on the monuments. It is
mainly
on evidence drawn from these sources that
I rest my
interpretation of Osiris.

The ground upon which some modern writers seem
chiefly The solar
to rely for the identification of Osiris with the sun is
that ~~osSsfdocs~~
the story of his death fits better with the solar
phenomena not explain
than with any other in nature. It may readily be
admitted a ~~^Vresw--~~
that the daily appearance and disappearance of
the sun rection.
might very naturally be expressed by a myth of his
death
and resurrection ; and writers who regard Osiris as
the sun
are careful to indicate that it is the diurnal,
and not the
annual, course of the sun to which they
understand the